

Bull Spring Fire Salvage Supplemental Information to Decision Record for the Roaming Salvage Environmental Assessment

(EA # OR014-96-04)

Introduction

In early August of 2001, the Indian Springs Fire started on private land and burned approximately 2,500 acres before containment. Approximately 120 acres of BLM land burned in the Bull Springs area which included about 80-90 acres of merchantable timber and 20-30 acres of plantation trees. Approximately 90% of the merchantable timber and plantation trees were killed in the fire.

Site Specific Information

Threatened and Endangered Species

Northern Spotted Owls - The proposed treatment area is on the east side of the resource area and is outside the boundary defined in the Northwest Forest Plan for northern spotted owl habitat.

Bald Eagles - No known nest sites occur in the area. All potential habitat has been burned.

Lost River and short nose suckers - The proposed treatment would not impact habitat for the suckers because:

- 1) There are no perennial or fish bearing streams in the proposed treatment area, and;
- 2) The Lost River is about 7 miles, at its closest point, from the proposed project area, and;
- 3) No direct drainages lead from the proposed project area to the Lost River, and;

The KFRA senior biologist has made a site specific "No Affect" determination for the proposed Bull Springs Fire Salvage for all T&E species.

Survey and Manage Species

The Bull Spring Fire Salvage area is outside the Northwest Forest Plan boundary that requires compliance with the new Record of Decision for Survey and Manage Species.

Cultural Surveys

Cultural surveys were completed in the area. A single cultural site was located in the area. Cultural protection and management procedures outlined in the EA will be followed.

Riparian Reserves

A single spring is located in the area; Bull Springs. Three water troughs have been placed near the spring for wildlife purposes. There are no perennial or intermittent streams in the analysis area. The draw where the old road is located has been classified as ephemeral.

Vegetation

Vegetation consisted primarily of mixed aged ponderosa pine and scattered white fir. Based upon the post burn examination, there was a high percentage of shrub component consisting of manzanita, mountain mahogany, and wild plum and cherry. There was almost complete consumption of the forb and shrub component and over 80% mortality of the conifers.

Proposed Treatments And Mitigating Measures

On August 23, 2001, the Klamath Falls Resource Area (KFRA) Interdisciplinary Team toured the burned area. The following proposals, resource impacts, and mitigating measures were addressed:

Harvest the merchantable timber as soon as possible to reduce the spread of bluestain and loss in value of the timber to allow for reforestation (planting) next spring. All commercial forest lands within the 120 acres are part of the eastside Matrix land use allocation.

Grass seed the existing road through the draw and 50+ feet each side of the draw with native seed and regreen to reduce potential sedimentation

Fall/place residual snags and/or slash along the contour, particularly in the main skid trails, to reduce potential erosion.

Protect the spring site with a no-harvest buffer. No tree removal within the existing fenced site would occur.

Avoid yarding in the undisturbed portions of the draw next to the road.

Retain, at a minimum, 2 snags per acre; at least one snag greater than 16" DBH and one snag at least 12" DBH.

Survey and protect any cultural sites.

Either permanently or seasonally block the existing road through the draw. Further analysis needs to be done to determine impact to adjacent landowners if the road is to be permanently blocked. In the meantime, the existing road will be used for salvage operations and the road will remain open for public access. Some measures will be taken to reduce erosion on the roads including using water bars, water blocks, eliminating roadside berms, and slash placement.

Use a "slash-buster" to knock down and break-up the residual dead brush in the plantation area that would inhibit planting next spring. Approximately 30 acres would be "slash-busted" to prepare sites for planting.

Plant and possibly tube the entire area in the spring of 2002.

NEPA Compliance

The KFRA Interdisciplinary Team recommended using the existing Roaming Salvage Environmental Assessment that analyzes the impact of removing both scattered and concentrated salvage material scattered through the entire KFRA. The Decision Record for the Roaming Salvage EA was signed on May 21, 1996. This EA analyzed the impacts of:

salvage and thinning harvests involving up to five timber sales,
treatments continuing for up to five years,
the salvage and thinning harvests of up to 15 MMBF.

The Roaming Salvage Environmental Assessment analyzed the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts of salvaging both concentrated (primarily windthrow) mortality and scattered mortality that often occurs with incidental insect outbreaks. Approximately 13 MMBF of timber has been harvested in five timber sales to date (West Rome 1, Lower Spencer Salvage, West Rome II, SKB Salvage, and STH Salvage). This proposed action has the same objectives as the original EA, but is outside the time period (five years) and number of sales (five) as specified in the EA, Finding Of No Significant Impact, and Decision Record. This supplemental information document analyzes the site-specific impacts associated with the harvesting and site prep treatments of the burned Bull Springs area. The impacts of the proposed treatment above are the same as those already analyzed in the Roaming Salvage EA. The proposals and mitigating measures listed above address the site-specific concerns and impacts for the Bull Springs Fire Salvage proposal.

Conclusion

This project is consistent with the initial Roaming Salvage Decision Record, which is consistent with the goals and objectives of the:

- Final Klamath Falls Resource Area Resource Management Plan (RMP) and its Record of Decision (June 1995).
- Klamath Falls Resource Area Fire Management EA (OR-014-94-09)
- Klamath Falls Resource Area Integrated Weed Control Plan EA (OR-014-93-09).
- Interior Columbia Basin Final Environmental Impact Statement / December 2000

The *Interior Columbia Basin Final Environmental Impact Statement - Proposed Decision* (ICBEMP - FEIS) was published in December of 2000. Alternative S2 was selected as the preferred alternative. No official direction has been given to the agencies in regards to incorporating that decision into the individual land use plans (RMPs) for the administrative units. The proposed Bull Spring Fire Salvage removal will not preclude implementing the Proposed Decision of ICBEMP.

I have determined that neither a change to the Roaming Salvage Environmental Assessment (EA) nor the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is necessary. The existing Roaming Salvage EA addresses harvesting scattered salvage throughout the KFRA. There will be no substantial changes to the action as proposed in the EA with the exception on how the salvage is sold. The Roaming Salvage EA refers to using a "hot cruise" method for selling the salvage. A certain portion of the timber is marked prior to the sale. Upon implementing the sale, additional timber is added up to a certain threshold. In the case of the Bull Springs Fire Salvage, an adjacent and existing timber sale contract would be modified to include the burnt timber, so removal could be expedited. The proposed treatment is within the scope of the alternatives identified in the EA and the environmental impacts are within those analyzed in the Roaming Salvage EA. There are no significant new circumstances or facts relevant to the environmental concerns and bearing on the modification to the proposed action or its impacts which were not addressed in the EA.

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